



LOCAL SERVICE NATIONAL VOICE

JOHN M. LAWSON

*President & Chief Executive Officer*

July 24, 2007

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Goodlatte:

On behalf of the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS) and local Public Television stations across the United States, I am writing to convey our appreciation for your support of Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin's amendment to extend the Rural Utilities Service Public Television Digital Transition Grant Program during last week's mark-up of H.R. 2419 -- the Farm, Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act of 2007, and our endorsement of this legislation as it makes its way to the House floor for debate and consideration.

Successful passage of H.R. 2419 will now ensure that rural Public Television stations will continue to have the ability to seek much-needed assistance as they transition from analog to digital broadcasting.

Public Television embraced digital broadcasting early due to the many benefits that can be gained from digital television, including improved education services, distance learning and even an improved public alert and warning system to help Americans in the wake of disaster. These benefits are even more important for rural communities, where distances are greater and the number of local broadcasters is fewer.

The transition to digital television, however, is not guaranteed to go smoothly. APTS has actively sought to increase federal support to non-profit, public service media to assist in the transition to digital television and the federally mandated switch-off of analog broadcasting.

**The Association of  
Public Television Stations**

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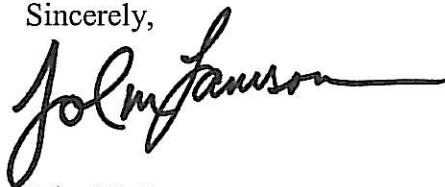
*website* [www.apts.org](http://www.apts.org)

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As Representative Herseth Sandlin expressed, the federally-mandated conversion to digital transmission has presented significant challenges to our rural Public Television stations. Underfunding this conversion would stifle the development of the new generation of services that these stations can provide to their communities through digital television.

Again, APTS is deeply appreciative of your work, and that of your staff, on behalf of rural Public Television stations nationwide, and looks forward to continuing to work with you and other Members of Congress to provide all Americans access to the highest-quality digital public media services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John M. Lawson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John M. Lawson  
President and CEO  
Association of Public Television Stations